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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/665,490	09/22/2003	Minoru Hiragaki	K-2131	6880
32628	7590	02/24/2005	EXAMINER	
HAUPTMAN KANESAKA BERNER PATENT AGENTS SUITE 300, 1700 DIAGONAL RD ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314-2848				KATCHEVES, BASIL S
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3635				

DATE MAILED: 02/24/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.	10/665,490	Applicant(s)	HIRAGAKI, MINORU
Examiner	Basil Katcheves	Art Unit	3635

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 September 2003.
2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) Claim(s) 1,2 and 4-6 is/are allowed.
6) Claim(s) 3 and 7 is/are rejected.
7) Claim(s) 8 is/are objected to.
8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent Publication No. 04-285232 to Fukumoto.

Regarding claim 3, Fukumoto discloses a pipe member with a hollow core and a reinforcing plate inserted within (fig. 1). Fukumoto also discloses the steel pipe as having inserting holes (fig. 12: 5), the reinforcing elements placed in an orthogonal orientation with the pipe (figs. 1 & 8) with guiding elements (8c) which have stop members (see side bevel of 8c), the guide member having sloped surfaces (bevel on sides of 8c) that expand to both sides (beveled sides of 8c which meet with main member 8) and pinching joint holes (fig. 6: see pinch of intersecting corners).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Patent Publication No. 04-285232 to Fukumoto.

Regarding claim 7, Fukumoto discloses a pipe member with a hollow core and a reinforcing plate inserted within (fig. 1) and welded (abstract). Fukumoto also discloses the steel pipe as having inserting holes (fig. 12: 5), the reinforcing elements placed in an orthogonal orientation with the pipe (figs. 1 & 8) with engaging elements (8c) which have stop members (see side bevel of 8c), the guide member having sloped surfaces (bevel on sides of 8c) that expand to both sides (beveled sides of 8c which meet with main member 8) and pinching joint holes (fig. 6: see pinch of intersecting corners). However Fukumoto does not specifically disclose piercingly forming the outer holes. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Fukumoto by piercing the holes on the pipe, in order to ease assembly and provide for hole locations specified by particular plans. Also, Fukumoto does not specifically disclose a suspending means for the reinforcing element. However, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a suspending means to hold the reinforcing member prior to insertion, as there must be something to push the member into the hole.

Claim Objections

Claim 8 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1, 2 and 4-6 are allowed.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

The cited patents listed on the included form PTO-892 further show the state of the art with respect to steel pipe reinforcements in general.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Basil Katcheves whose telephone number is (703) 306-0232. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 7:30 am to 4:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Carl Friedman, can be reached at (703) 308-0832.

BK



Basil Katcheves

2/15/05

Examiner AU 3635